

# ***FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET***

**Meeting Date:** May 14, 2015

**Agenda Item:** Missouri River Fishing Access Site

**Division:** Fisheries

**Action Needed:** Endorsement

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 5 minutes

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## **Background**

FWP is seeking Commission approval to conduct due diligence toward potentially acquiring a fishing access site on the Missouri River in Cascade County. The site is located on the Missouri River adjacent to the Carter Ferry FAS approximately 3.2 miles southeast of Carter. This is a 105-acre parcel with 0.25 mile of Missouri River frontage. It borders the Carter Ferry FAS along the entire north boundary of the FAS boat launch. The Missouri River at this site provides angling for smallmouth bass, sauger, walleye, northern pike, shovelnose sturgeon, channel catfish and a myriad of nongame fish. The landowner has expressed interest in disposing of this parcel.

## **Public Involvement Process & Results**

FWP has conducted the following:

- Discussed options for acquisition with the landowners agent.
- Informal discussions with several members of the public to gauge public interest in the site.

If endorsed to proceed, FWP would formally evaluate the location to include an environmental assessment, with public notices and opportunities for review and comment.

## **Alternatives & Analysis**

The landowner has expressed interest in disposing of the parcel. There are two boat launches upstream at 16.2 miles (Morony Dam) and 12.5 miles (Widow Coulee FAS). Downstream, the two closest boat launches are 16 miles (Fort Benton) and 36 miles (Loma). This part of the river is popular among anglers, and FWP estimated this section of the Missouri River had 18,126 angler days in 2013. The parcel is accessible by county road.

## **Agency Recommendation & Rationale**

FWP recommends that the Commission endorse its request to conduct due diligence toward potentially acquiring the property. With minimal development, the site could provide public access for shore fishing in the Missouri River, waterfowl hunting, upland bird hunting, deer hunting, trapping furbearers, bird watching and nature walks.

## **Proposed Motion**

I move that the Commission endorse FWP's request to negotiate the acquisition of a fishing access site on the Missouri River.